

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 DHA-05 /087 W
-----053821 251650Z /43

P R 251320Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5388
INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 8102

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PGOV CG
SUBJECT: AN END TO THE PURGES?

REF: A) KINSHASA 7916 B) KINSHASA 7651 C) KINSHASA 7576

1. SUMMARY: AN AGENCE ZAIRE PRESS (AZAP) EDITORIAL APPEARING ON AUGUST 24 COULD HERALD AN END TO THE PURGES MOBUTU HAD PROMISED TO MAKE IN THE CIVILIAN SECTOR (REFTEL C). ENTITLED "THE STABILIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE", THE EDITORIAL FEATURES AN ALMOST BIBLICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE GUIDE'S (I.E., MOBUTU'S) ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE, ONCE PUNISHMENT HAS BEEN METED OUT TO THOSE DESERVING IT. THE MILDNESS OF TONE REPRESENTS A SHIFT FROM THE MORE PUNITIVE NOTES SOUNDED AT THE TIME OF SAMBWA'S DISMISSAL AND NGUZA'S ARREST. END SUMMARY.

2. THE AZAP EDITORIAL BEGINS BY STATING THAT ONE OF THE "CARDINAL VIRTUE" OF MOBUTU'S LEADERSHIP IS KNOWING HOW TO PUNISH SEVERELY WHEN IT IS NECESSARY TO DO SO BUT WITHOUT "LOSING ONE'S HEAD." "JUST AS HE KNOWS HOW TO PUNISH, THE GUIDE ALSO KNOWS HOW TO PARDON." IT WAS NOTED THAT MANY WHO ARE LIFTED FROM "ANONYMITY" BECOME ONE OF THE HUIDE'S COLLABORATORS ARE OVERCOME BY
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DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR AND COME TO SEE THEMSELVES AS BEING AT HIS LEVEL. THIS SAME FEELING OF "NEVER HAVING ENOUGH" IS DESCRIBED AS HAVING BROUGHT ABOUT THE RUIN OF THE FIRST LEGISLATURE FOLLOWING INDEPENDENCE, WHOSE PRIME ACTORS WERE ALWAYS AT "DRAWN DAGGERS."

3. THE EDITORIAL STATED THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SEVERAL WEEKS MOBUTU PERSONALLY PRESIDED OVER AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON AUGUST 23 (AFTER THE SWEARING-IN OF TWO NEW MEMBERS, COMMISSIONER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS UMBA-DI-LUTETE AND COMMISSIONER FOR NATIONAL ECONOMY KAPEND SAKABWANG MOND). IT WAS NOTED THAT MOST MEETINGS IN RECENT WEEKS HAD BEEN CONDUCTED BY FIRST COMMISSIONER MPINGA.

4. THE EDITORIAL AFFIRMED THAT THE CHIEF OF STATE HAD ONCE AGAIN BROUGHT UP THE CONDUCT OF HIS FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER TO SERVE AS A WARNING. IT CONCLUDED THAT THE FACT THAT THE "GUIDE" DELIVERED A "MORAL LECTURE" IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SWEARING-IN OF THE TWO NEW COMMISSIONERS "CONSECRAES THE RENEWAL OF CONFIDENCE WITHIN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL" AND "THE STABILIZATION OF THIS ORGAN OF THE STATE."

5. COMMENT: THE EDITORIAL DEALS WITH THE PRESIDENT'S FORGIVENESS OF MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND DOES NOT MAKE CLEAR WHETHER HIS MAGNANIMITY IN FACT EXTENDS TO THE CIVILIAN SECTOR IN GENERAL. WE BELIEVE THE ARTICLE TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY AZAP CHIEF ELEBE, THE MAN THROUGH WHOM MOBUTU CHOSE TO ANNOUNCE THE NEWS OF NGUZA'S ARREST. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ELEBE WOULD HAVE TAKEN SUCH A NEW EDITORIAL TACK UNLESS SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED TO DO SO BY MOBUTU.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, ARRESTS, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KINSHA08102
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770307-0767
Format: TEL
From: KINSHASA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770825/aaaaauek.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: db6a7053-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 KINSHASA 7916, 77 KINSHASA 7651, 77 KINSHASA 7576
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1489526
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AN END TO THE PURGES?
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SOPN, CG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/db6a7053-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009